

CONNECTICUT PLANNING



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Connecticut Chapter

Making Great Communities Happen

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Lead Story:

Times change, and change often presents opportunity. Today's unique economic climate makes it possible to create opportunities, through our land use process, to promote meaningful and "responsible" growth for our communities.

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A Planner's Resolution for the New Year: Create Opportunities for Our Communities

by Christopher J. Smith, Shipman & Goodwin, LLP

Many within the land use profession have lamented the lack of vision and time required to incorporate "smart" or "sustainable" growth measures into our state's heavily regulated land use process. Well, times change, and change often presents opportunity. Today's unique economic climate makes it possible to create opportunities, through our land use process, to promote meaningful and "responsible" growth for our communities.

Within the past few years land use professionals, legislators and concerned

citizens across the state have spent significant time exploring regulatory measures that may be implemented by municipal, regional and state agencies to more effectively promote and manage growth. There have been blue ribbon commissions, task forces, and working groups that have analyzed and evaluated "smart" or "responsible" growth, "effective growth management," or "sustainability" regulatory tools (choose your preferred term) that have a history of success in other parts of the country.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Happy New Year to all!

The New Year always brings thoughts of past and future and of friends and family. So, as I hold the position of President of CCAPA, this New Year caused me to reflect on the past year and the planner family that CCAPA is. Therefore, I want to take this time to recognize and thank a number of individuals for their continued efforts to support CCAPA.



First, I want to thank all of the members of the CCAPA Executive Committee for their time, dedication, and hard work to keep this organization running and provide high quality service to its members. Specifically I want to thank John Pagini for his countless hours of work as PDO and administering the AICP Certification Maintenance program. John made a difficult process and program easy and manageable for the Chapter and its members. Jason Vincent deserves thanks for his endless efforts with the CCAPA website, newsletter, and now the CCAPA Facebook page. And thank you to Dan Tuba for his decades of service to the Chapters and his leadership on the Southern New England Planning Conference

committee. The 2009 conference was the most successful conference to date. I also want to thank Chris Wood for his continued legislative efforts, representing the interests of planning at the state legislature. Although she is not a member of the Executive Committee, I also want to thank Val Ferro for her yearly efforts in organizing the CCAPA Awards and the Awards Celebration each December. The CCAPA Awards program is a celebration of planning and planners and a testament to great work that so many planners and community volunteers do every day with little recognition. Last, I want to thank each and every one of our CCAPA members who participate in the organization through volunteering and through attending programs, conferences, and functions. It is your participation that drives CCAPA. The list of thanks could go on and on, but there is only so much space here.

Thinking about all the individuals who get involved has caused me to think about planning, planners, and community as well as what it means to be a professional planner — not based on education or a professional credential like AICP — but as member of a community. As planners we are constantly faced with the concept of community and the complexities of defining, explaining, and maintaining community in the context of our jobs and land use planning. But, I am concerned that we may often forget our roles and responsibilities within our profession. As many of you know, I have been teaching planning and geography at local colleges and universities for a few years now. As part of my classes I often give assignments that require students to find out information about their towns, local government, planning, and the planning process. In some cases my students are also asked to interview their town planners and/or land use officials. These assignments are design to help the students learn and understand their communities and how planning works. For the student who may decide to go into planning as a profession it gives her a firsthand look at planning and planners. And for the student who never becomes a planner, but will be a resident and taxpayer, it shows her that she can get

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Students are our future. Most will never become planners or commission members, but some will. Regardless, all of them are or will become residents and taxpayers — members of our local communities. That alone gives them the right to our time.

CONNECTICUT PLANNING

is published quarterly by the Connecticut Chapter of the American Planning Association. Contributions are encouraged. Submissions should be submitted via email or CD-ROM, and must include the name and contact information of the contributor. Material may be edited to conform to space or style requirements. Please address submissions to Executive Editor Emily Moos (see contact information below).

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A Planner's Resolution, cont'd

However, this expanded knowledge has yet to be utilized to any meaningful degree in Connecticut.

Our state's economy is relatively quiet in most areas. Development proposals are scarce — just look at those municipal planning, zoning, and wetlands meeting agendas. According to the State's first Economic Strategic Plan recently published by the Department of Economic and Community Development ("DECD"), the current economic climate demands action to ensure the livability of our communities, and maintain a high quality of life for the state's citizens. To remain competitive we need to make the land use permitting process more predictable, efficient and consistent at the municipal, regional and state levels. We also need to promote and target growth to "preferred" and existing developed areas within our municipalities. In turn, this leaves other areas available for less intensive development, or for preservation and conservation.

Are we willing as a profession, including those citizens in the trenches serving on municipal land use boards, to take advantage of the information and knowledge generated within the past few years concerning "responsible growth" measures, and implement these proven regulatory land use tools at the local level during these quiet times? This article explores some of the measures that your community may consider implementing to achieve this laudable goal.

Address Nagging Historic Regulatory Problems

Every municipal land use agency has had persistent issues pertaining to certain provisions in its land use regulations. For example, should a certain use be subject to site plan instead of special permit review; should particular uses require a traffic study; are certain definitions unclear and, as a result, problematic; or, is there a problem with how the regulations address

rear lots? Now is a good time to modify your regulations to address these matters. There is no reason to wait for a general overview that may not occur for another five or ten years. Clean them up now.

Register the significant nonconforming uses, structures and lots within your municipality to create a baseline going forward. This can be accomplished by issuing a certificate of zoning compliance, or zoning permit, with an attached plan depicting existing conditions. Every municipality has a "short list" of such nonconformities. To have these nonconformities on record benefits the municipality

when addressing future conversions or expansions, and the landowner when marketing such properties.

Memorialize and update filing fee schedules. Also, update application forms and include "check offs" for statutory required notices for adjacent

towns, regional planning agencies, and water companies to ensure that an applicant addresses these notice requirements at the time an application is filed as opposed to "discovering" them at a public hearing. If provided for in your regulations, personal notice requirements such as mailings, or posting of signage requirements, should be included on an application form. Updating your filing fee schedules and application forms shouldn't take much time or involve substantial costs. This effort will eliminate confusion, frustration and delay during the processing of an application where the applicant is not aware of every regulatory and statutory notice requirement. Indeed, it's difficult for the land use professional to keep up to date with all the varying filing and notice requirements!

How About Implementing Some Responsible Growth Measures?

■ Incentive zone districts

An incentive zone district is generally limited to areas of a community that have

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Would you like to see certain uses or architecture within particular areas of your municipality? One way to accomplish these goals is to provide bulk area requirement incentives.

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A Planner's Resolution, cont'd

established infrastructure which will support denser development. Established infrastructure includes access to major roadways, public sewer and public water. An incentive zone district guides development to underutilized properties within existing centers. The overall objective is to support existing communities such as "first ring" suburban towns, and not abandon them to "outer ring" rural areas.



An incentive zone district accomplishes a number of goals. First, it identifies and prioritizes where a municipality would like to see more intensive development. Second, it provides a mechanism for more creative land uses, such as denser, mixed use developments, where such "mix" would otherwise not be permitted in existing single use zone districts. Third, it not only informs prospective developers where a municipality wants to see this type of development, but if the zone is done correctly it may provide for streamlining the permitting process (e.g., require site plan as opposed to special per-

mit review). Fourth, it informs prospective developers that these more intensive uses are not encouraged in other areas which may be limited to less dense development. Fifth, it may operate as an overlay zone which preserves the underlying zone and its uses while creating additional land use options for the properties located within a designated incentive zone area.

An example of an incentive zone district is provided by Chapter 124b, entitled "Incentive Housing Zones", of the Connecticut General Statutes, commonly referred to as the HOMEConnecticut legislation. This legislation authorizes the creation of incentive housing zones that include established densities and require a minimum affordable housing component. If a municipality creates such zone for identified properties in compliance with this statutory provision, the municipality is eligible to receive monies from the state to offset infrastructure and educational costs that may be associated with such development. Another example of an incentive zone district is an overlay zone

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Focusing development in areas with existing or already planned infrastructure continues to make sense; especially where government "stimulus" funding may be available for improvements to such infrastructure in the near future.

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Large-sized, very expensive homes and condominiums are not only in less demand, but are less likely to receive financing during these economic times... It's important to understand that entry-level housing is not only in demand, but is needed for economic growth.

A Planner's Resolution, cont'd

that permits a mixed use development (residential/commercial/retail).

■ Incentivize your bulk area requirements

Would you like to see certain uses or architecture within particular areas of your municipality? Would you like to encourage pedestrian-friendly measures such as bicycle lanes or walk areas free from automobile traffic? One way to accomplish these goals is to provide bulk area requirement incentives for a developer which reduce development restrictions in exchange for specified development enhancements.

Greater density, FAR, or lot coverage may be permitted for a use if certain architecture, "green building," or pedestrian/bicycle enhancements are included in a proposal. Setback or height requirements may be reduced or increased by an established percentage in exchange for such enhancements. For example, if a mixed commercial/residential development proposal provides for parking in the rear only, and includes sidewalks and bicycle racks, then the front yard setback is reduced to 25 feet as opposed to 50 feet. Another option is to increase the maximum impervious surface from 40% to 60% in exchange for such site design attributes. These provisions are not "waivers" or "variances." These provisions simply provide different bulk area requirements for explicit uses that provide specific site design enhancements.

These bulk area requirement incentives, or bonuses, can be incorporated

within designated zone districts to encourage, for example, a mixed use development in an existing center or within a "transitional area" where existing commercial uses border residential uses.

■ Understand the new market realities and their impact on development proposals

Those large-sized, very expensive homes and condominiums are not only in less demand, but are less likely to receive financing during these economic times. "Entry level" or "workforce" housing is not only in demand, but is currently more likely to obtain financing. DECD's Economic Strategic Plan recognizes that a substantial disadvantage for Connecticut in promoting economic growth is the state's lack of both a sustainable workforce, and affordable housing. DECD found that this is, in part, a result of the state's land use permitting process, which discourages entry level or workforce housing, and the "myth" that such housing generates one public school age student for every new dwelling. It's important to understand that entry-level housing is not only in demand, but is needed for economic growth. In addition, it is a housing product that can currently obtain financing when many other products cannot.

Municipalities must also be cognizant of the fact that it is very difficult to obtain financing for retail uses. When addressing mixed use developments that include a retail component, it is important to be flexible in specifying a "use mix" percentage relative to what a developer can actually finance in today's economic climate.

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A Planner's Resolution, cont'd

In such a situation, it may be beneficial to have a flexible "commercial" component that may include retail, offices, hotel, government, or research facility uses.

Finally, focusing development in areas with existing or already planned infrastructure continues to make sense; especially where government "stimulus" funding may be available for improvements to such infrastructure in the near future. Although it is difficult, at best, to determine where such government monies may be directed, efforts to take maximum advantage of existing infrastructure should be encouraged.

Conclusion

As George Allen, the onetime head coach for the Washington Redskins foot-

ball team, once said in his book of the same title: "The future is now." We are confronted with economic and community growth challenges that require immediate action. We need to update and improve our land use process at all levels of government now. The starting point for many of us is at the local level with our municipal land use regulations. From a statewide, regional and municipal perspective, this effort, if done correctly, will result in more "responsible" or "sustainable" growth that will enhance the livability of our communities, maintain the high quality of life that we currently enjoy, and preserve such for future generations. Indeed, in these challenging times, one might argue that not to do so borders on being "irresponsible."

Good luck in your endeavors, and a happy and healthy New Year to all! 🏠

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REINVENTING COMMERCIAL STRIPS: REDEVELOPMENT DESIGN STRATEGIES TO CREATE MIXED-USE CENTERS A WORKSHOP WITH RANDALL ARENDT

This workshop will focus on practical ways of reclaiming existing strip commercial areas, often characterized by dysfunctionality and visual blight. Multiple strategies blending the twin disciplines of Conservation Design and New Urbanism will be discussed for rebuilding these corridors, gradually increasing their functionality and attractiveness. These concepts offer significant opportunities for commercial and mixed-use redevelopment, particularly in areas with existing infrastructure, increasing the viability of businesses, service providers, and current/future public transit lines.

A digital slide show will be used to illustrate progressive approaches, emphasizing multi-story mixed use buildings, affordable housing, public transit possibilities, shade tree planting, design standards, signage, native landscaping, improved circulation patterns, parking orientation, stormwater infiltration/recharge, night sky protection, and solar features. This topic is of interest to civic leaders, Planning Board/Commission members, professional planners, landscape architects, and engineers, commercial property owners and investors, and developers who stand to benefit from the redevelopment and adaptive reuse of aging highway commercial corridors into multi-use centers for the 21st century. **This workshop is being offered as part of the CRCOG Sustainable Communities Initiative.**

When?

Wednesday, February 3, 2010
Registration: 12:30 p.m.
Program: 1:00 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.
3 CM Credits Pending

Where?

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Registration deadline: January 27, 2010.

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Buses for a Green City

by Amanda Kennedy, Associate Planner, Regional Plan Association

This fall, I attended a community forum on sustainability called “Stamford: The Green City.” Business leaders, advocates, teachers, and students met to discuss how Stamford can reduce its carbon emissions and solid waste streams, and ultimately, how to plan for a future in which energy costs may disrupt our reliance on personal vehicles and fossil fuels. I felt a little sheepish driving to the sustainability event two miles north of downtown. Getting there by bus would have been simple, but getting back would mean a 45-minute wait and searching for a bus stop alongside a busy road on a chilly night.

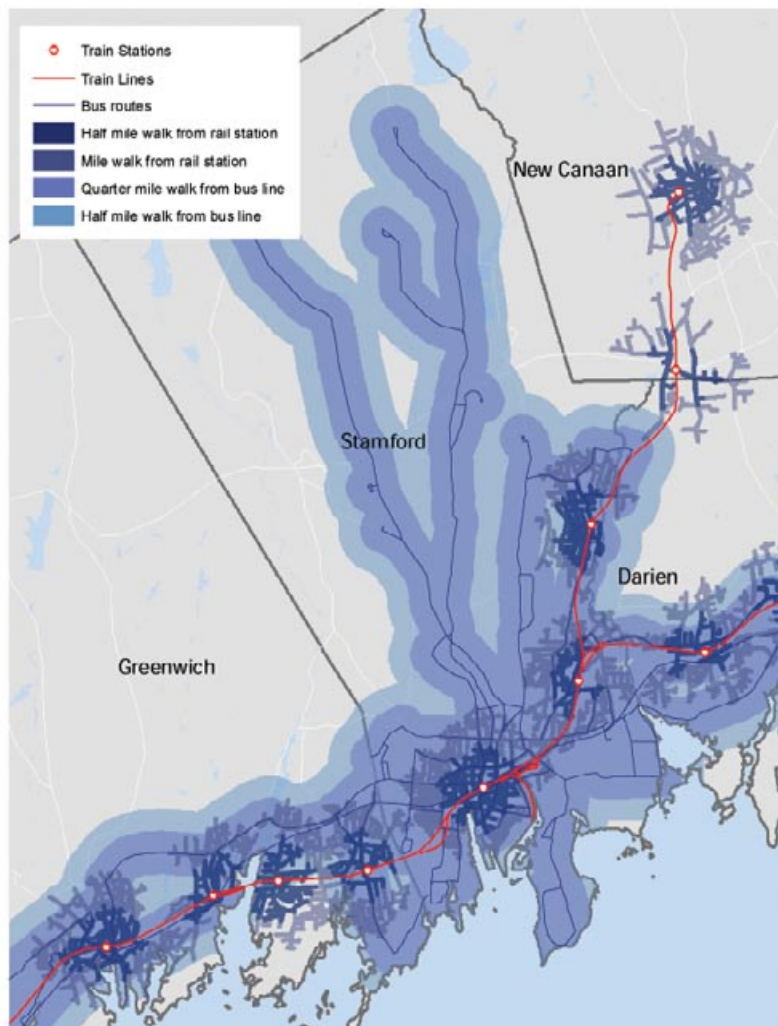
The evening’s discussion was fantastic. The recurring theme was that Stamford should be more walkable and offer better transit options, so that people don’t

need to drive everywhere. Many speakers were enthusiastic about sidewalks, bike lanes, and a light rail proposal that would link downtown and the train station with neighborhoods to the north and south. I was feeling optimistic about the world until one panelist challenged the group by asking, “How many of you have ridden a bus in the last 30 days?” About a third of the 50+ people raised their hands. A beat, then: “How many have ridden a bus *in Stamford?*” All of the hands went down but mine. I was sad to see that my fellow Stamford residents, who all seemed to have so much passion for the environment and for Stamford’s sustainable future, weren’t making use of an existing resource: Stamford’s bus system.

America’s resistance to buses is both mystifying and understandable. Heading home from the RPA Connecticut office in downtown Stamford, it’s faster and cheaper for me to step outside to catch a bus than it is to navigate the labyrinth of elevators and parking structures to reach a car that I must pay to park and then pilot alongside Stamford’s notoriously aggressive drivers. In the winter, I board a warm bus with minimal waiting time instead of having to start up a cold car. On the other hand, using the Stamford bus system successfully in Stamford requires a thorough knowledge of timetables (since schedules are either not posted, or out-of-date), a good mp3 player (to tune out brake squeals and the conversations of other riders), and a great deal of patience for slow travel speeds and cold, dark bus stops. Riders must also put up with belching diesel fumes and dirty seats. Only about 5% of Stamford workers commute by bus.

If Stamford is truly to become a green city, it needs to go beyond sidewalks, bike lanes, and the limited transit coverage provided by rail and light rail. Like many Connecticut communities, Stamford consists of both urban and suburban neighborhoods — a network of commercial and mixed-use corridors connecting village centers

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Buses for a Green City, cont'd


surrounded by single family homes. Many households are several miles away from any of Stamford's three train stations. Buses are the only realistic way to reach most Stamford residents, but carbon neutrality seems out of reach unless we can find a way to boost bus ridership.

The U.S. Department of Transportation recently awarded stimulus funding to Connecticut to upgrade new buses already on order from standard diesel technology to hybrid diesel/electric and fuel cell vehicles. New, clean vehicles are a big step towards improving the riders' experience, but it's time to make upgrading urban and suburban bus systems a real priority. Technology exists and has been implemented in many communities to create a network of clean and efficient

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bus routes that compare with rail systems in their comfort, frequency, and accessibility, but have greater reach than rail and can service lower density neighborhoods. Dedicated lane bus rapid transit like the New Britain-Hartford busway is one strategy for longer routes, but local on-street buses can also receive prioritized green light signals and provide real-time scheduling data by screen or phone. In my commuting fantasy, I could time leaving the office to meet my bus just as it pulls into a well-lit, covered stop. The bus system's speed, cost, and convenience would attract additional bus riders, which in turn would enable more frequent service and additional bus hubs outside of downtown. The trick is to make bus service an amenity that people value, rather than an option of last resort. ■

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Fear and Loathing in the Job Market

by DeWayne Woods

Returning to the United States as an Army Veteran, college was in my sights. I knew I would face the inevitable job search, but our current economy led to a fear of this process. Now, after 2-½ years, I am facing the same tough decision as many of my peers looking toward graduation. Should I apply to graduate school or go into the job market?

School is important, but nothing can replace experience. I graduate in December so I have been checking Jobs Online at the APA (www.planning.org/jobs/) and reading articles like “Silver Lining” from the July 2009 issue of *Planning Magazine* (www.planning.org/planning/2009/jul/silverlining.htm), searching for insight on existing markets for job-seeking planners. But my first impression of the job market came from searching for internship positions.

I am an undergraduate student in the Bachelor of Urban Planning & Development program at Ball State University in Muncie, Indiana. The planning department requires that we complete an internship between our junior and senior year. The experience of my class included sending countless letters, emails, resumes, and portfolios with few results. It was not until the end of the semester that we received feedback. Several of my classmates were granted permission to participate in projects through the University to fill their requirement while others took non-paid internships. Fortunately, I found a

Community Development Corporation (CDC) (www.westindydev.org) with a need for an intern. Moreover, they were paying.

My experiences in Indiana, including my internship, have been great; but we are moving to my wife’s hometown (Berlin, Connecticut) after graduation. My wife and I met while serving in the Army, where we lived in South Korea for just over four years. Moving to New England was part of a bargain we made since we are from different states.

In anticipation of moving to New England, I became a member of the Connecticut and Massachusetts chapters of the APA and learned of the Southern New England APA conference. Hoping a job fair would be some part of the festivities, I packed my bags, loaded up resumes and my portfolio, and headed out to Mohegan Sun. Alone at the big casino and not knowing anyone, I was ready to talk myself into employment. However, of all the vendors and sponsors at the conference, not one was looking for new employees. I did begin the networking process, though, and I won the kayaking package in the raffle, so it was not a total loss. For the raffle prize, they announced my name, and from in front of 500 people or so I overheard one woman say, “Why is this guy here?” It seemed to have echoed throughout the room. It was comedic.

Though some jobs are out there, I fear having to find them and loath having to do it under these economic conditions. Even though the recession is showing signs of receding, APA’s Jobs Online only has about forty postings ranging from entry to executive level, scattered across the country. In my mind, a job in planning comes down to two things: qualifications and a willingness to move. Already moving, my focus must be my qualifications and meeting the needs of employers. Despite the unemployment figures and layoffs in the industry, I am somehow optimistic. But I am still looking for a silver lining on the horizon. ■

The experience of my class included sending countless letters, emails, resumes, and portfolios with few results. It was not until the end of the semester that we received feedback. Several of my classmates were granted permission to participate in projects through the University to fill their requirement while others took non-paid internships.



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Calling All Young Planners!

by Khara Dodds & Emily Moos

As planning professionals we've all heard this message: The State of Connecticut is losing young people age 24-35 faster than any other state in the country. Because this is true, it can be difficult for young people, young planning professionals included, to find each other to network, share ideas or just to sit down after a long work week and socialize! CCAPA has taken on a new task which is to develop a calendar of events and set of programs especially for younger planners in their 20s and 30s. An inaugural event took place at the Southern New England Planning Conference at Mohegan Sun. Attendance surpassed expectations and attendees were asked to fill out a survey detailing the types of events and programs young planners would like to attend in Connecticut. Survey results revealed that the majority of young planners in Con-

necticut are not currently engaged in any CCAPA activities. When asked for suggestions on how the Chapter can engage more planners under 40, the majority of those who responded recommended more social and networking events. Other suggestions included quarterly meetings and meetings centered around topics of interest. 90 percent of those surveyed said that they would be interested in participating in these types of events in the future. Did you also know that the Connecticut Chapter is now on Facebook? If you haven't already, join our Facebook page. Add CCAPA as a friend and watch for postings for future Happy Hours, networking and other opportunities. Look for upcoming Young Planners events for planners under 40 on the Connecticut listserve and the Chapter's Facebook page! 📱

CCAPA has taken on a new task which is to develop a calendar of events and set of programs especially for younger planners in their 20s and 30s.

Calendar of Events



■ February 18-21 —
The Connecticut Flower & Garden Show

More info: www.ctflowershow.com

■ February 23 —
Connecticut Association of Wetland Scientists Annual Meeting: "Impaired to Pristine"

More info: www.ctwetlands.org

■ March 3 —
14th Annual Design and Construction Industry Joint Dinner Meeting

More info: <http://tinyurl.com/y9ll8su>

■ April 10-13 — **APA National Convention, New Orleans**

More info: <http://planning.org/conference>

For updates and other events, visit www.ccapa.org!

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From the Editor:

For those who don't know me, let me introduce myself. I am Emily Moos, and I work as a community development planner at the Capitol Region Council of Governments in Hartford. I am also your new *CT Planning* editor and like most of you, I'm sure, I enjoy exploring new topics in planning. I hope you'll indulge me as I select a topic to write about in each newsletter — a topic I've come across in my work or my travels or a topic that has been brought to my attention by friends in the field. I would consider all of the readers of this newsletter to be friends, so if you're reading and you've learned something new or come across a planning topic that more people should know about, please tell me and I'll consider it as an inspiration for this section of the next newsletter. Thanks and I hope to hear from you at the address or number below. For now, please enjoy this quarter's topic. ■

EDITOR'S TOPIC

Contemplating the “Traditional” Neighborhood

by *Emily Moos, Connecticut Planning Editor*

This summer I visited the southwestern United States for the first time. Having spent my entire life living in the northeast, I was struck once again by the difference five hours across U.S. air space can make in the type of landscape that surrounds you. A flight change caused me to land in Colorado Springs, four hours north of my first destination, Taos, New Mexico. A subsequent long drive alone through the desert afforded me time to reflect upon magnificent views like nothing I'd ever laid eyes on before. As usual when I head out west, what strikes me the most is the lack of development, particularly as night began to fall, darkness began to cloak everything around me, and my cell phone signal waned with every mile I traveled. Driving alone in the dark in a new place can be disconcerting; in the desert, it can be terrifying. However, being a planner always helps to mitigate this type of terror because, let's face it, we planners are constantly fascinated by what surrounds us — the built and natural environment — so we are really never without something to contemplate. What I contemplated on those dark, desolate, desert roads were two questions: where are the neighborhoods around here and what do they look like?

In the welcome light of a beautifully sunny Taos morning the next day, I began to seek answers, and I didn't have to go far to begin finding them. My hotel was located on the Taos Plaza. Now a tourist destination, the Plaza dates back to the late 1700s and is much like the southwestern version of New England's town green, as it has been used as a public common or community gathering place. It is immediately surrounded by a walkable, vibrant mixed use neighborhood with shops, houses within ¼ -mile distance, restaurants, etc. — exactly the type of scene that confirms for planners that some of the most successful places are those that reach back in time to take lessons from the traditional values and community mindedness of this country's early settlers, evidenced in the way they constructed their built environment. Thinking that I had just seen New Mexico's quintessential example of a traditional neighborhood, I felt satisfied. But my next stop turned satisfaction to further contemplation.

Standing in the earthy, brown presence of the Taos Pueblo is like standing in front of an altar or the base of a Colorado mountain range. It's a spiritual
(continued on page 13)



Photo courtesy of Flickr

Contemplating the “Traditional” Neighborhood, cont’d

experience. For me, this was partly because walking past door after door I felt a connection to the women I saw inside who were my grandmother’s age (early 90s) wearing traditional clothing, selling bread they had baked in adobe ovens that morning, something they had likely done every morning since they were little girls. But the main reason I felt moved by this place was because I began to realize that this pueblo is possibly one of our country’s best examples of a traditional neighborhood — a much older and wiser version than the one exemplified at the plaza. It’s older because it was built 1,000 years ago or 800 years prior to the plaza and wiser because, aside from being a vibrant, walkable, mixed-use neighborhood for its 150 current year-round residents, it houses young, old, rich and poor tribal members in dense, multi-family dwellings, was built with human hands out of mud and straw, requires no fuel or electricity for heat or light, no sewers or water pipes, has laws prohibiting disturbance of the freshwater stream running through it, the snow capped mountain towering over it and the 95,000 acres of desert land surrounding it. The pueblo as a traditional

term “sustainability” that we hear so often today. The pueblo was built to blend the most equitable version of social, economic and environmental aspects of daily living into a sustainable harmony that we as planners seek to inspire in our communities and incorporate in new regulations, plans and developments.

About five miles past the Taos pueblo, over the Rio Grande Gorge Bridge, is a new community built entirely by a company and technique called Earthship Biotechnology (www.earthship.net). Witnessing an Earthship is another kind of spiritual experience, especially for a



Photos courtesy of Emily Moos



neighborhood delivered to the world a glimpse of a “development that allows people ‘...to meet the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs,’” one thousand years prior to the 1987 report, *Our Common Future*, commissioned by the U.N. General Assembly, which used these words to define the

planner. Think back to the first time you saw Frank Lloyd Wright’s drawings of the Future City in planning school or the movies *Metropolis* or *Blade Runner* and you’ll know the feeling. Earthships are built with a combination

of six design principles: 1) Thermal/Solar Heating and Cooling, 2) Solar and Wind Energy, 3) Contained Sewage Treatment, 4) Building with Natural and Recycled Materials, 5) Water Harvesting, and 6) Food Production. It costs about the same amount to heat, cool and light an Earthship home per year as it does to maintain

(continued on page 14)

Contemplating the “Traditional” Neighborhood, cont’d

a daily Starbucks fix for a month, and you can grow a salad for lunch right next to your kitchen sink. Your bedroom walls might be adorned with patterns made from the bottoms of glass bottles, and your water comes almost directly to you from the most recent rainfall. If it had not been for the fact that I visited the Pueblo fifteen minutes prior to the Earthships, I might have missed the connection. Celebration in Florida, Mashpee Commons in Massachusetts and even Blue Back Square in Connecticut

seek to recreate neighborhoods like the one surrounding the Taos Plaza. Similarly, the Earthships recreate traditions, but they reach back further to the traditions of the pueblo.

Sustainability is a key goal for planners in the 21st century. We seek to achieve it through supporting energy retrofits to municipal buildings, exploring alternative energy sources, incorporating higher densities and mixed uses into plans and regulations, designing neighborhoods to be more bike and pedestrian friendly, taking advantage of the incentives offered through the HOME-Connecticut program to create more affordable housing or countless other activities. Although many more join the effort

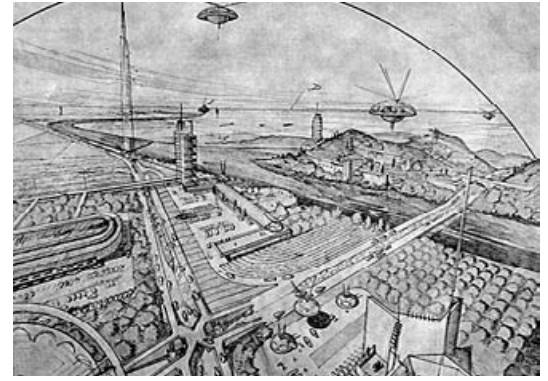


photo courtesy of www.johncoulthart.com



photo courtesy of www.earthship.net

to create more sustainable communities with each passing month it seems, it can still be a daunting task because change is difficult no matter how beneficial it can be for the future of a community. For this

reason, it is important to remember that creating more sustainable communities, especially through changing the decisions we’ve been making about land use, is really more about going back to the trusted and traditional as I found on my trip to New Mexico. I am always reminded of the ending line of F. Scott Fitzgerald’s *The Great Gatsby*, “So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past.” ■

Emily Moos is Senior Community Development Planner for the Capitol Region Council of Governments. She can be reached at emoos@crcog.org or (860) 522-2217, ext. 219.

It costs about the same amount to heat, cool and light an Earthship home per year as it does to maintain a daily Starbucks fix for a month, and you can grow a salad for lunch right next to your kitchen sink

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President's Message, cont'd

involved in planning within her community.

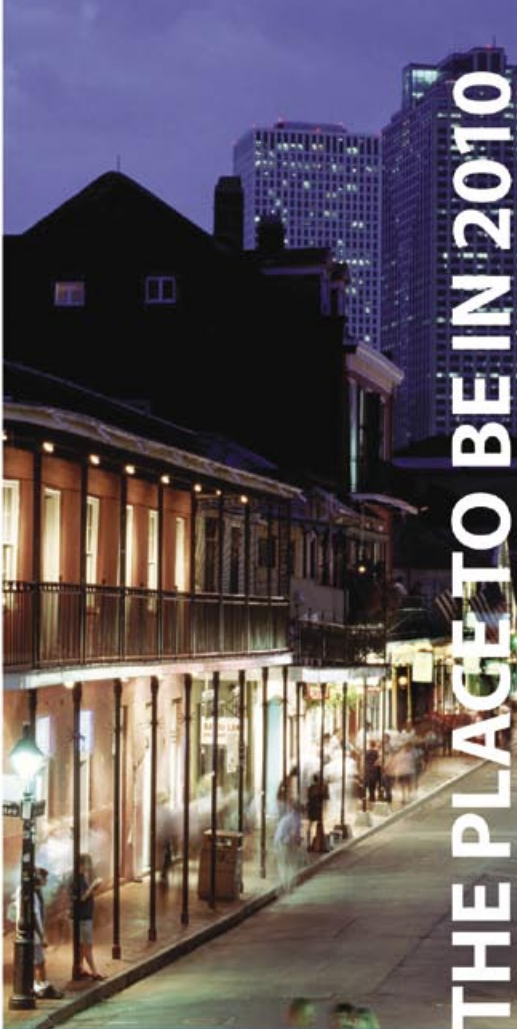
Reading my students' papers and hearing their experiences is very rewarding. To see those moments they have — learning and understanding — are priceless. One particular student came into class one night and told me of TV news story related to variance in his town and how he was so pleased to know what the story was about. Many students tell me about the enthusiasm of the planners they met with, the excitement the planners expressed when explaining their jobs, and how they learned about past and present issues and their hometowns. I have heard so many positive remarks about Alan Weiner in Bristol, Bill Warner in Middletown, Marcia Banach and Michele Lipe in South Windsor, and staff in countless other towns.

What concerns me is the few students who tell me about planners and land use staff who don't return their calls, say they are too busy, or complain about having to take time out of their day to meet with students. While these cases are few, the fact that they occur at all is disheartening to me. I know what it is like to work in and to run a local planning office. I recognize that it can be busy and difficult. But, I can't think of a time when I did not have an hour or two to meet with a student interested in government, planning, and what I did for a living. When I was a student I had similar assignments and I recall Craig Minor, Glenn Chalder, Bruce Hoben, and Mark Pellegrini all taking the time meet or talk with me. Today I am honored to have become a planner, to have worked with them, and to have become friends with the individuals who were once just anonymous planners I contacted as part of an assignment. More importantly, I recognize now that each of them influenced my interest in planning.

Students are our future. Most will never become planners or commission members, but some will. Regardless, all of them are or will become residents and taxpayers — members of our local communities. That alone gives them the right to our time. But, more important than their rights are our obligations as planners, public servants, and as members of a

profession that value community and see it as one of the most critical aspects of planning. I ask that in 2010 and beyond, each of us, if the opportunity should arise, take the time to share our experience with a student. ■■■

— Donald J. Poland, AICP



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What concerns me is the few students who tell me about planners and land use staff who don't return their calls, say they are too busy, or complain about having to take time out of their day to meet with students.

Is it a taking of private property without just compensation in violation of the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution for the State of Florida to claim ownership under the public trust of any new beach area formed after the state restores and stabilizes the beach?

A Hard Line in the Sand: Stop the Beach Renourishment v. Florida

by Dwight Merriam, FAICP, Robinson & Cole LLP

The takings case recently argued in the U.S. Supreme Court could turn out to about the same as a blind date — really fun and exciting, or a miserable waste of time. I’m betting on the former.

The case is simple; the underpinnings exceedingly complex. Here’s the sound bite version: Is it a taking of private property without just compensation in violation of the Fifth Amendment of the U.S. Constitution for the State of Florida to claim ownership under the public trust of any new beach area formed after the state restores and stabilizes the beach?

Knowing about this case is important for all planners, not just those on the coast, because it goes to the issue of how far the government can regulate in the public interest.

Florida loves its beaches, and its tourist economy is utterly dependent on them. Impress your friends with these dandy facts: Florida has 1,197 miles of shoreline and 825 miles of sandy beaches. (By way of sad comparison, Connecticut has a little less than 100 miles of shoreline.) Of 62.3 million visitors in 2001, 22.4 million — over a third — said going to the beach was their principal activity during their stay. Those beach tourists pour sand out of their shoes and pour \$24 billion into the state’s economy each year. So it is not surprising that over four decades ago Florida enacted legislation giving the state the authority to protect and enhance beaches. The beaches are endangered. In 2008 there were 400 miles of critically eroding beach and almost 100 more miles of non-critically eroding beach. Sea level

rise promises to worsen the loss.

Now, you must suffer through a short law school lecture on the common law — law made by the courts — of land titles as they relate to shorelines. If you have

a waterfront lot and the deed says “bounded by the waters of Long Island Sound” then you need to go find the ordinary high water mark or mean high tide line. That’s the extent of your land. Beyond that you have riparian or — more correctly because we are on the ocean, not a lake or river — littoral rights. I looked it up in my *Merriam-Webster’s* (where else?) and the first choice pronunciation for littoral is \li-tə-ri\. Compare that with the word “literal”: \li-t(-)ri\. They are pronounced almost

alike. Or you can put the emphasis on the last syllable. You say tomato, I say tomato.

If your land slowly erodes, you lose your land, physically and legally, as the mean high water moves inland. You don’t have the right to rebuild that beach, as a general rule. I say “as a general rule,” because there are circumstances with altered shorelines and structures where you do have the right to maintain, repair and rebuild.

On the other had, should the sand gods look favorably on you and that beach in front of your coastal McMansion grows slowly through accretion, you won the coastal Lotto — you have more land and you can exercise dominion over it.

Now, for a different rule, if a hurricane wipes out your beach — this is called “avulsion” — you can renourish the beach right back to where it was. You

(continued next page)

A Hard Line in the Sand, cont'd

don't lose your title to that land. You get to pile the sand back on until you get back to the where the mean high tide was the day before the storm.

Property owners challenged the Florida law which permanently fixed the historic high tide line (they call it the "Erosion Control Line" under the law). The state set that line because they are spending great sums renourishing eroded beaches and don't want that dynamic line moving in and out with erosion and accretion. The property owners say the ECL takes away their right to gain new land through accretion and their littoral right of direct, physical access to the water, which would be interrupted by the state's new strip of land if there is accretion. The Florida Supreme Court held for the state. No taking.

Justice Stevens, who owns a waterfront home in a Florida beach renourishment area, didn't show up, so it was eight justices. The argument seemed to go for the state. "You didn't lose one inch," Justice Breyer said to the property own-

ers' lawyer. "All you lost was the right to touch the water. But the court here says you in effect have that right because you can walk right over it and get to the water." Even conservative Justice Scalia, assessing the value of the government beach renourishment program, said: "I'm not sure it's a bad deal."

If there is a 4-4 tie, the Florida Supreme Court decision stands and the state wins, but there is no written decision and no precedent created. The pundits predict a clean win for the state, not a tie.

I encourage you to read both Florida District Court of Appeals and Florida Supreme Court decisions, and the transcript of the U.S Supreme Court argument. Go to www.inversecondemnation.com and click on "beach takings case." You'll learn plenty about accretion and avulsion...and takings law. ■

Go to www.inversecondemnation.com and click on "beach takings case." You'll learn plenty about accretion and avulsion...and takings law.



Above: Miramar Beach. Background photo: Topsail Road Beach. Photos courtesy of The Beaches of South Walton County Tourist Development Council.

New Emphasis on Planning in Washington

by Christopher S. Wood, AICP, CCAPA Government Relations Committee Chair

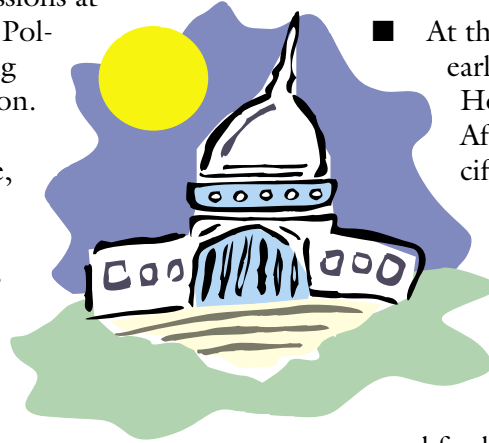
The Chapter will continue to work with the State congressional delegation and APA National to ensure that Federal programs and legislation recognize our State's needs.

Sustainability and livability are the objective terms being used by the White House and on Capitol Hill to describe new and enhanced programs and legislative proposals to revitalize our communities. These concepts were central to the presentations and discussions at the recent APA Federal Policy and Program Briefing conference in Washington.

■ At the White House, a new Office of Urban Affairs was established early this year and it has already spearheaded a collaborative partnership by the Department of Housing and Urban Development, the Department of Transportation, and the Environmental Protection Agency. This initiative, described at <http://tinyurl.com/cfcy3f>, will foster sustainability through better coordination of housing, transportation, and environmental programs. HUD proposes \$150 million in the 2010 budget for this sustainability initiative, including planning grants, through the Community Development Block grant program.

■ Senator Chris Dodd has introduced the Livable Communities Act (S. 1619), which would provide a multi-year authorization for the sustainability initiative. The

bill authorizes funds for regional planning to make communities more livable and seeks to eliminate barriers to federal coordination in promoting sustainable development. A House companion bill is expected to follow soon.



■ At the Policy Conference earlier this month, White House Director of Urban Affairs Adolfo Carrion specifically cited the need for smart planning to promote sustainability and livability. These are encouraging developments, demonstrating recognition at the Federal level of the

need for better planning to help communities deal with current challenges.

■ CCAPA members are encouraged to follow the progress of these initiatives, and offer support or comments based on firsthand knowledge of community issues and needs. Tips for communications and advocacy may be found on the APA website, www.planning.org/advocacy.

■ The Chapter will continue to work with the State congressional delegation and APA National to ensure that Federal programs and legislation recognize our State's needs. Chapter members' comments are welcome. ■

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2010 Legislative Session Preview

by Christopher S. Wood, AICP, CCAPA Government Relations Committee Chair

Budget and economic conditions are likely to continue dominating the attention of the Connecticut legislature, but we expect that renewed efforts to address planning needs and coordination will see further progress. As we approach the 2010 legislative session, here's some of what we will be following.

Planning and Development Chair Brendan Sharkey is continuing his inclusive effort to better define and organize growth management concepts through his Smart Growth Working Group. At the same time, last year's smart growth bill, PA 09-230 (<http://tinyurl.com/yb75c55>) requires the Continuing Committee on Planning and Development to prepare a report on the State Plan, including the process for adoption, the incorporation of the newly defined principles of smart growth, the application of the plan by state agencies' actions, and the integration of the plan with municipi-

pal and regional plans. CCAPA participated in informational hearings on the State Plan during the last session and recently before the Continuing Committee.

These efforts are likely to lead to additional refinements to the statutes that guide planning. We intend to continue working with legislators and other interests to clarify and streamline these statutes to ensure consistency, collaboration, and innovation in planning at all levels in Connecticut.

As always, we are also looking for opportunities to repair, improve, and clarify administrative and procedural provisions that create difficulties, confusion, or undue costs to municipalities and regional planning agencies. Examples are the treble damages provision for zoning enforcement, the classified legal notice requirements, the immediate posting of minutes on local websites, and the state fee collection requirement. We hope to find legislators willing to support revisions to some or all of these provisions and will work closely with the Connecticut Conference of Municipalities and other interests.

Everyone makes a big deal about unfunded mandates every year, but little actually gets done to remedy the problems. Maybe that will change in today's fiscal and economic environment, and planners and municipal officials should be sure that our concerns are raised. CCAPA members are encouraged to identify statutory or other provisions that impede your effectiveness and efficiency or create excessive costs.

Meanwhile, stay tuned for new developments and requests to add your voice as CCAPA contributes to ongoing improvements to planning in Connecticut. ■

As always, we are looking for opportunities to repair, improve, and clarify administrative and procedural provisions that create difficulties, confusion, or undue costs to municipalities and regional planning agencies.

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Everett J. Prescott, Inc. will sponsor a Coastal Erosion Control Workshop on February 23 in New London and February 24 in South Kingstown, RI. Keynote Speaker Jon C. Boothroyd, a Professor in the Dept. of Geosciences at the University of RI, is primarily a field geologist specializing in coastal, braided river and various glacial environments. The workshop will be held from 7:30 a.m.-2:30 p.m. and will include six different sessions. More info: <http://www.ejprescott.com/about/UpcomingEvents.php>

Make Believe Main Street

*Lifestyle centers create public squares in private places.
Can a nation undone by sprawl be saved by the mall?*

by David Schartenberg

The rebirth of downtown Providence has been the stuff of breathless travel writing for more than a decade now. But the city center can still feel vacant. Even seedy. And the rest of Rhody's Main Streets? Well, they've seen better days.

Quaint villages like Wickford, in North Kingstown, remain strong. Newport has survived the worst crimes of urban renewal. But you don't have to look hard to find the places left behind.

Downtown Pawtucket and Woonsocket are shadows. Cranston's Rolfe Square is moribund, even with the recent resurrection of a long-dormant neighborhood theater. And in Westerly, a similar theater sits vacant.

For too many Rhode Islanders civic life, circa 2009, is uncentered.

Now, though, a new and curious sort of gathering place is taking root — in Cranston, Johnston, Westerly, South Kingstown, and across the country. It is the "lifestyle center" and it looks, at first

glance, like the Main Street it would replace.

There are street lamps, benches, and plazas. Shops on the street level, and office space and apartments above. There are summer concert series and wine tastings. And Santa Claus makes an appearance at Christmastime.

But the phenomenon is, at bottom, a grand contrivance. A bait-and-switch. The new public square, you see, is really a private space. A branded community. The mall gone outdoors.

Saint Nick is there to drive sales. The view from the condo complex is of Cold Stone Creamery. And leave those anti-war signs at home. Protest is bad for business.

It is enough to make Jane Jacobs groan from the great beyond. Or is it?

Can right-thinking folk, put off by the Disneyfication of downtown, really spurn a green, walkable space in the heart of suburbia? Is community in the name of brand

(continued on page 21)

The lifestyle center has its roots in the nation's first suburban shopping center — the Country Club Plaza, an open air development in Kansas City that dates to 1923.



Make Believe Main Street, cont'd

loyalty better than no community at all?

Can a nation undone by sprawl come together again at the mall? It is a question, it turns out, that goes back decades.

Planning for Permanence

The lifestyle center has its roots in the nation's first suburban shopping center — the Country Club Plaza, an open air development in Kansas City that dates to 1923.

The brainchild of developer J.C. Nichols, the plaza was the centerpiece of his Country Club District, an expansive planned community erected in the early decades of the 20th century along the Missouri-Kansas border.

Even then, forward-thinking types were lamenting the emergence of suburban sprawl. And Nichols saw the district as an antidote to the flimsy and ephemeral. He was, he said, "planning for permanence." And permanence he got.

Nichols built sturdy homes on curving streets. Carved out space for churches

and schools and parks. Filled his shopping center with statuary, fountains and Spanish Colonial architecture. And like the lifestyle center developers who would follow, he went about the careful construction of community feeling.

There were field days and birdhouse-building contests in the district. And Nichols deployed the Easter Bunny and a Halloween witch to whip up business for the plaza's shops.

But the Country Club District, which inspired planned communities like Cranton's Garden City in the decades that followed, offers a mixed legacy.

Nichols dotted his shopping plaza with apartment buildings, but most who repaired to the pedestrians' paradise arrived by car. This, like its progeny, was a green development with a heavy dose of gray.

And the Country Club District, as its name would imply, was not for all. The plaza had a certain democratic feel. And Nichols built some relatively affordable housing for soldiers returning from World War II.

(continued on page 22)

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Make Believe Main Street, cont'd

But restrictive covenants, which set minimum sales prices for the bulk of district homes, kept ownership out of reach for most. And the rules excluded at least one demographic quite explicitly. "Ownership by Negroes," they read, was "prohibited."

Those Bastard Developments

But the Country Club Plaza, for all its flaws, was better than what followed.

Victor Gruen, the Austrian-born architect who designed the first enclosed mall — Southdale, outside Minneapolis — envisioned something like Nichols' project: a shopping center with a "Garden of Perpetual Spring" at its center and a lake, schools and houses rimming the commercial colossus.

When the mall opened in 1956, to great fanfare, the garden was in place. But there was no lake. There were no schools and no houses. Only acres of parking lots. And the count-less imitators that followed did little better. Primitive zoning codes and a bottomless appetite for tax revenue

cleared the way for an eager class of builders with none of Gruen's concern for place.

"The developer community of the 1950s and 1960s was a cowboy community," said Paco Underhill, author of *Call of the Mall*, in a recent interview from his Manhattan office. "They were making deals and doing things so quickly, no one was asking them to present a complex master plan."

By 1978, the father of the American mall was disowning Southdale and the projects it spawned. "I refuse to pay alimony," Gruen quipped, "for those bastard developments."

The emergence of the lifestyle center can be read, in part, as a reaction to the inward-looking, sprawl-inducing behemoths Gruen came to despise. But it was the ubiquity of the mall, more than its design, that drove the return to a Country Club Plaza-type development.

The cowboys had saturated the market. And a new generation of builders, keen on accommodating the expansion plans of the Gap, Starbucks, and Ann Taylor Loft, needed to differentiate.

Memphis-based developer Poag & McEwen built the first lifestyle center in 1987. But the concept took off in the early and middle part of this decade: developers, according to the International Council of Shopping Centers, erected about 100 lifestyle centers between 2000 and 2006.

Rhode Island was a bit behind the curve. Here the phenomenon is a more contemporary affair.

In Cranston, the retail portion of Chapel View is open, but crews are still working on the bulk of the residential section. In Westerly, the Atrium at the Quarry took the place of an old strip mall a few months ago. The Centre at Cherry Hill in Johnston just opened its first store — a Walgreen's rimmed by red, white, and blue pennants. And a Coventry development is still on the drawing board.

But South County Commons, South Kingstown's village-on-the-highway, dates back to the boom years. And it is, perhaps, the most fully evolved of Rhode Island's lifestyle centers.

(continued on page 23)



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Make Believe Main Street, cont'd

"Oh Sherry"

Pull into the parking lot and you're greeted, first, by a pair of warnings for wayward youth: there is no loitering, "police enforced." And skateboarding, it seems, is a crime.

It's a short walk from the car to South County Commons Way, where Rick Perry nudges the flaneur down the sidewalk, "Oh Sherry" drifting from one discreetly placed speaker after another.

Just past the bakery and lingerie shop, the Brewed Awakenings coffee shop offers plush leather chairs, a flat-screen television and a jar of biscotti. Above the shops, paintings of bobbing boats and seaside homes line quiet, carpeted hallways that lead to lawyers' offices and the headquarters of the National Domestic Preparedness Coalition. Al Qaeda, they must have figured, would never look here.

It is a clean and bright sort of living. And for the truly enamored, the Preserve at the Commons offers a chance to own a bit of the new downtown — if you have

the means. Condominiums here sell for \$400,000 to \$600,000.

Over in Cranston, the bulk of The Residences at Chapel View are still taking shape: the hand-scraped plank hardwood floors and gas fireplaces with custom textured marble are the stuff of brochures for now.

But the development is already sending high-end signals. At Gents Barber-shop and Spa, a royal shave — pre-shave oil, foaming lather, and mini-facial included — runs \$48. And Kristina Richards, "premium denim" shop, sells a \$176 pair of jeans by Hudson and a full line from Rich & Skinny.

But Gents and Kristina Richards, if painted in high gloss, still represent a dash of local color — a bit of Rhode Island enterprise to go along with Ted's Montana Grill. And the developers of South County Commons, though eager for a Gap or Victoria's Secret, have wound up with a heavy complement of local merchants.

That's no small departure. Even the proto-lifestyle centers — the Country

(continued on page 24)

Above the shops, paintings of bobbing boats and seaside homes line quiet, carpeted hallways that lead to lawyers' offices and the headquarters of the National Domestic Preparedness Coalition. Al Qaeda, they must have figured, would never look here.



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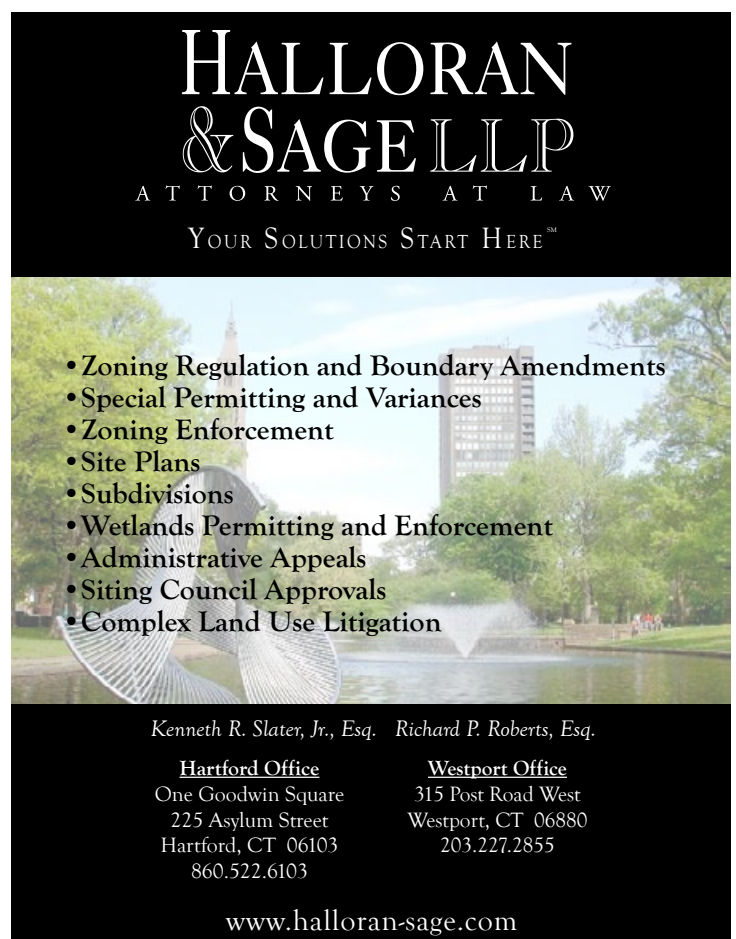


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Indeed, the downtown business owners feel confident enough these days to smirk a bit at their sterile rival down the road. Wakefield, they suggest, is a real place and South County Commons something less than.

Make Believe Main Street, cont'd

Club Plaza and Cranston's Garden City shopping center, among them — have largely surrendered to the big-name brands at this point.

And at Chapel View, it is not merely the merchant mix that gestures to the local. The development sits on the site of the old Sockanosset School for Boys, a long-time home for the sort of juvenile delinquents lifestyle centers do their best to ward off these days. And Rhode Islanders of a certain age still recall, with a peculiar fondness, cruising past the 19th-century Gothic campus with parents who threatened to leave them at the gates.

Carpianato Properties, developer of the shopping center, has preserved some key elements of that elaborate check on naughty behavior. The training school chapel, referenced in the project name, remains in place with plans for conversion to a restaurant. A handsome copper beech lingers on the property. And crews have stitched together three of the old stone dormitories with new construction, providing a three-story mix of retail, offices and condominiums. U.S. Senator Jack Reed maintains an office on site.

Anthony Corrente, 71, a retiree stepping into Ted's Montana Grill with his wife on a recent afternoon, said he was



glad to see bits of the training school preserved — and cleaned up. “I worked at the other end of the institutions, so I know what it was like,” he said. “It was a dump, in plain English.”

And if the lifestyle center poses an existential threat to Main Street, it's not all that evident yet. Merchants in downtown Wakefield, near South County Commons, vigorously opposed construction of the lifestyle center. But while a movie theater at the Commons spelled the end of an older model near the town center, the impact seems mostly muted.

Indeed, the downtown business owners feel confident enough these days to smirk a bit at their sterile rival down the road. Wakefield, they suggest, is a real

(continued on page 25)

2010 Ecological Landscaping Association Conference

The Ecological Landscaping Association announces its 2010 Conference, “Expanding the Ecological Landscape: Maximize Biological Potential, Minimize Environmental Impact and LOVE IT!” on February 25 at the MassMutual Center in Springfield, MA. Learn how to maximize biological potential, minimize environmental impacts and obtain spectacular results at this one-day conference. Seventeen sessions offer multiple tracks focused on water use, landscape design, pest control, and application of practical skills. Experienced educators and practitioners provide sessions covering many aspects of ecological, sustainable and organic landscaping, while the Eco-Marketplace presents opportunities to explore new options in landscaping products and services. Dinner features a keynote address by Toby Hemenway, author of *Gaia's Garden, a Guide to Home-scale Permaculture*, who will share his design approach based on ecological principles that creates sustainable landscapes, homes and workplaces. Full brochure and online registration are available at www.ecolandscaping.org/conference.html. ■



Make Believe Main Street, cont'd

place and South County Commons something less than.

They are right, of course. But perceptions could shift. The Country Club Plaza has survived, has become something permanent. And the Commons may do the same.

We Enjoy It

Retired sales manager Al Cusa, 67, walking his English coonhound Piper on a recent afternoon, paused to talk about life at the mall. Cusa, who rents a two-bedroom apartment at the Commons with his wife, says the development doesn't compare to the main drag in his hometown in Long Island.

"There were a lot more restaurants," he said, "a lot more jewelers."

But the guys at the Right Click were quite helpful when he ran into some computer trouble recently, he said. And while the complex feels a bit transitory — there are more than a few college kids, here, a few partial to late-night, drunken swims

in the pool — some of the older crowd have been gathering for regular dinners at the clubhouse.

"We enjoy it," Cusa said.

Just down the road, Kevin Saunders, 30, says he recently moved up from Virginia with his wife Jen, 32, and daughter Ava, almost 2, to attend graduate school.

Before they came north, a relative visiting Rhode Island stopped by the development and offered a mixed assessment. "I don't know," Kevin recalled her saying, "it's a little strange — it's this fake village."

But the Saunders clan has taken to the place. Jen, who teaches pilates, walks to work at the Gold's Gym on the other side of the development. And she recalls the Commons' summer concert series with a certain amount of fondness. "People would pack their picnic baskets, bring their coolers, and hang out," she said.

Positively Main Street. Sort of.

David Scharfenberg can be reached at dscharfenberg@phx.com. Reprinted with the permission of the Providence Phoenix, Copyright 2009. All rights reserved. ■

Downtown business owners feel confident enough these days to smirk a bit at their sterile rival down the road. But perceptions could shift. The Country Club Plaza has survived, has become something permanent. And the Commons may do the same.



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Professional Development News

by John D. Pagini, AICP, Professional Development Officer

2010 AICP Exams

The May 2010 AICP Exam is scheduled between May 10th and May 24th. Those planning to take the May 2010 or November 2010 Exams are encouraged to attend the Annual AICP Exam Classroom, scheduled this year for Saturday, March 27th at DiLoreto Hall, CCSU, New Britain. More details will be available in the coming months. Those who plan to attend the classroom should contact John Pagini at pagini@charter.net.

Those planners who intend to take either the May or November exams are urged to contact John Pagini concerning their intentions. The Chapter President Council's CD is available at no charge to planners who intend to take the Exam on either of these dates.

Certification Maintenance

2008-09 CM Cycle

The Chapter was very active in the past year offering 12 programs at 15 venues for a total of 58-³/₄ CM credits. This did not include the Southern New England Planning Conference at Mohegan Sun which offered a choice of 54-¹/₂ credits for nearly 12 possible credits for conference attendees. Besides the popular and successful programs put on by CEDAS and the Chapter, the Chapter expanded its collaborators to include CRCOG, HOMEConnecticut, and the Connecticut Transportation Institute (CTI). The Chapter also collaborated with other organizations and agencies such as SWRPA, SECCOG, the Connecticut Main Street Center, Lorman, and a collaboration of National Chapters (webcast series) to

bring even more programs for CM credit. The Chapter also purchased a number of CDs approved for CM credit which were loaned to Chapter members.

The Connecticut Chapter fared better than the national average for member CM credit recording.

Grace Period – 2008-2009 Cycle

A number of Connecticut planners have fallen short of the number of credits required (32) in connection with the first CM cycle. The CM Program, however, has a four-month grace period within which planners can add the additional credits required to meet the 32-credit target. Please see the programs listed below, as well as the Chapter CD-ROM lending program. Also, see the Utah Chapter webpage at www.utah-apa.org/webcasts.htm for free webcasts offered by a collaboration of APA State Chapters, including Connecticut. The final fall-back is the 2010 National Planning Conference scheduled for April 10-13, 2010 in New Orleans, LA.

Planners who are within this grace period and who are striving to earn the credits necessary to meet the CM requirement are asked to contact John Pagini at pagini@charter.net to receive assistance in formulating a strategy tailored to their specific needs.

2010-2012 Cycle

Once again, the Chapter is gearing up to provide programs so that planners can earn their required CM credits close to home. The following programs are being planned or have been held so far in 2010:

(continued on page 27)

The Hill-Stead Museum in Farmington announces two upcoming "Garden Lectures": on Sunday, February 7, from 2-3:30 p.m., landscape historian and author Judith B. Tankard will discuss the landscape designs of Beatrix Farrand (1872–1959), including Hill-Stead's Sunken Garden and other gardens covered in her new book, *Beatrix Farrand: Private Gardens, Public Landscapes* (The Monacelli Press, September 2009), which traces the life and work of Farrand, one of the foremost landscape architects of the early 1900s. On Sunday, March 7, from 2-3:30 p.m., Gail Collmann Griffin, Director of Gardens and Grounds at Dumbarton Oaks in Washington, D.C., will present "Lessons from the Master: Beatrix Farrand at Dumbarton Oaks," sharing lessons that modern-day gardeners can learn from Beatrix Farrand. Between 1920 and 1945, Farrand designed an extensive garden in Georgetown for Ambassador and Mrs. Robert Woods Bliss at Dumbarton Oaks. The 25-year collaboration between Mildred Bliss and Beatrix Farrand resulted in one of the most famous gardens in the world. More info: <http://hillstead.org/activities/lectures.html>.

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Professional Development News, cont'd

- Community Builders Institute Series with CEDAS and others.
- Collaborative efforts with CRCOG. The Chapter is co-sponsoring a CRCOG program on February 3, 2010 with Randall Arendt as the guest speaker concerning Commer
- Regional Shared Services Forum sponsored by OPM on January 14, 2010. Select sessions will be qualified for CM credit.
- CTI collaborations.
- Free webcasts will be offered to planners through a collaborative effort of a number of APA state chapters, including Connecticut. See the Utah Chapter webpage at www.utah-apa.org/webcasts.htm.
- Possible collaborative efforts with DEP are now being explored.
- The Chapter has purchased a number of CD-ROMs pre-approved for CM credit. Please contact John Pagini if you wish to borrow them under the Chapter's lending program. ■■

The Connecticut Association of Wetland Scientists (CAWS)



will conduct its 2010 ANNUAL MEETING on Tuesday, February 23 at The Mountainridge in Wallingford. The all-day program will feature several exciting speakers addressing the theme of "Wetlands: Impaired to Pristine." More info at: www.ctwetlands.org. ■■

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New Online Resource

The Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) and the University of Connecticut Center for Land Use Education and Research (CLEAR) have announced the launching of Connecticut Environmental Conditions Online (CT ECO), a state-of-the-art website that provides access to a wide variety of state environmental and natural resource information. CT ECO uses advanced software that combines internet and geographic information system (GIS) technology to provide information in multiple formats for users with varying degrees of technological capability. The site includes simple map downloads, interactive mapping, and map services for GIS software users. Check it out at www.cteco.uconn.edu. UConn and DEP will be conducting webinars in the near future to demonstrate the workings of the site and some of its many uses. ■■

The Connecticut Conference of Municipalities Presents "Making the Best Land Use Decisions — Wetlands, Water Quality Protection and Land Use Change" on February 17th from 9 a.m. — noon at the Glastonbury Town Hall. This workshop features speaker Sean Hayden, Northwest Conservation District, and is designed to help participants understand the relationship between wetlands, water quality, and permanent land use change. More info: <http://ccm-ct.org/education/>.

Success Begins With Who You Know!

The 14th Annual Design and Construction Industry Joint Dinner Meeting will be held on Wednesday, March 3 at Race Brook Country Club in Orange. The Design and Construction Industry Joint Dinner Meeting offers an extraordinary evening of networking, collegiality and relationship building for the members of more than 30 design and construction industry organizations invited. More information and online registration: <http://tinyurl.com/y9ll8su>. ■■

CCAPA Membership News

by Alan L. Weiner, AICP, Membership Chairman

■ Current CCAPA Membership

As of December 15, 2009, CCAPA had a total enrollment of 506 members, categorized as follows: AICP – 230 members; APA – 139 members; students – 74 members; officials – 41 members; Chapter-only – 22 members.

■ Welcome to Our Newest Members!

The following are the newest members of CCAPA (through 12/15/09):

Abigail Adams, New Haven
David Anderson, East Haven
Michael Blazewicz, New Haven
Jessica Bromberg, Bridgeport
Kyra Busch, New Haven
Ester Choi, New Haven
Marshall Duer-Balkind, New Haven
Catherine Fontana, New Haven
Carmen Guerrero Perez, New Haven
Xuemei Han, New Haven
David Henry, New Haven
Walker Holmes, New Haven
Melissa Ivins, New Haven
Binbin Jiang, New Haven
Matthew Jokajtys, New Haven
Tim Kramer, New Haven
Brea Kroecker, Hamden
Jesse Oppenheimer, New Haven
Kristin Pene, New Haven
Max Piana, New Haven
Jamie Pool, New Haven
Marissa Ramirez, New Haven
Cara Seabury, Philadelphia PA
Ran Song, New Haven
Emily Stevenson, New Haven
Randal Strobo, New Haven
Dewayne Woods, Muncie IN

■ Members in the News

William R. Sweeney, AICP, is now an Associate Attorney with the law firm of Tobin, Carberry, O'Malley, Riley & Selinger, PC (TCORS), as part of its Land Use, Environmental, Administrative and Business Law Practice teams. Bill has worked for TCORS for the last five years as a regulatory analyst and land planner and, before that, served as City Planner for the City of Norwich. Bill can be reached at 43 Broad St., P.O.

Box 58, New London 06320. Tel: (860) 447-0335. Fax: (860) 442-3469. Email: wrsweeney@tcors.com

It is with sadness that we report the recent deaths of two members of Connecticut's planning community:

Stanley Greimann, who retired in 1999 after working for more than 26 years as a planner with the CT River Estuary Regional Planning Agency in Old Saybrook (including several years as its Executive Director), died on December 10, 2009, at the age of 80. An obituary for Stan can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/ybbbj4l>.

Randy Kamerbeek, who most recently served as Director of Business Development and Marketing for the firm of Fuss & O'Neill of Manchester (and, among other positions, previously served as Economic Development Director for the City of Meriden) died on November 27, 2009, at the age of 61. An obituary for Randy can be found at: <http://tinyurl.com/yddmgmn>.

■ Changing Jobs?

Share the big news about your latest career move with the rest of us! Provide your new job information and contact info and we'll announce it in the next issue of *Connecticut Planning*.

■ Changing Addresses?

Please advise both the Member Records Department at APA's Chicago office and me of any changes to your APA mailing address.

American Planning Association
Member Records Department
122 South Michigan Ave., Suite 1600
Chicago, IL 60603
Tel: (312) 431-9100
Email: addresschange@planning.org

Report changes to CCAPA as follows:

Alan L. Weiner
9 High Street
Collinsville, CT 06019-3125
Tel: (860) 584-6225 (weekdays)
Email: ccapamembership@sbcglobal.net

Economic Indicators

AIA Connecticut invites you to a program entitled "**Professional Insight into Economic Indicators**," presented by Peter Gioia, VP and Economist for the CBIA, on February 19 at 9:00 a.m. in the AIA Connecticut office. Mr. Gioia will offer insight about Connecticut's economy and its impact on the built environment as we enter a new year. Cost is \$10. More info and registration: www.aiact.org/membersite/events.php?Date=20100219. 